

Information Item

Educational Policy and Programs Committee

In Pursuit of Educational Leaders

This item attempts to frame the topic of educational leadership in California's K-12 schools and community colleges by raising broad-based questions about the knowledge and skills needed not only by educational leaders themselves but also the students and society they serve. It also recommends a careful analysis of existing preparation programs before any new directions are pursued. This study builds upon many of the findings from the Commission's December 2000 report on *The Production and Utilization of Education Doctorates for Administrators in California's Public Schools*.

Presenter: Joan Sallee.



In Pursuit of Educational Leaders

Introduction

An intense current interest in issues of educational leadership exists seemingly at every level of government in California. With the many initiatives recently put forward for public school improvement -- including class-size reduction, high-stakes testing, content standards, the elimination of social promotion, intensive summer school and after school programs, a focus on reading and mathematics, and changes in teacher preparation and teacher credentialing -- has come a concern that educational leadership and vision may be lacking. There are reports of vacancies and lack of preparation among the ranks of the very school administrators necessary for such new initiatives to succeed. Also troubling is evidence that some individuals who already hold the necessary administrative credentials are unwilling -- citing reasons like lack of pay and excessive job stress -- to fill educational administrator positions.

Higher education is not exempt, with projections that many current community college presidents will retire soon and that existing applicant pools are lacking in both quality and diversity of candidates. Meanwhile, enrollment is shrinking in programs to train new community college leaders.

In response to these and related issues, there have been calls from several quarters for expanding graduate programs in public and independent colleges and universities, including programs in education. The California State University prepared a report stressing the need for more programs leading to the Ed.D. The Commission on Teacher Credentialing has called for strengthening the preparation of K-12 administrators, and the University of California has prepared a detailed summary of its current and projected efforts to prepare high quality educational leaders. The Joint Committee to Develop a Master Plan for Education, Kindergarten through University is examining, among others, issues of administrator supply and demand.

In December 2000, the Commission's report on *The Production and Utilization of Education Doctorates for Administrators in California's Public Schools* (CPEC 00-9) concluded that, based on estimated supply and demand over the next decade, California will be able to maintain the current percentage of public school administrators who hold a doctorate. Because this major finding met with some criticism, a number of other important issues meriting serious consideration from a public policy perspective received less attention. Among them: How should California prepare individuals to lead its K-12 schools and community colleges? Does it have sufficient and well-qualified faculty for these preparation programs in colleges and universities? Are there alternative routes to pre-

pare educational leaders that ought to be explored beyond the traditionally acknowledged ones?

This item begins to frame the topic of educational leadership in California's K-12 schools and community colleges by raising broad-based questions about the knowledge and skills needed not only by educational leaders themselves but also the students and society they serve. Not intended to be a comprehensive study of educational leadership or a plan of action, this overview serves rather to begin consideration of a complex set of issues that require serious and continuing discussion.

*Commission
involvement as the
State's higher
education coordi-
nating body*

In a presentation to the Commission on April 2, 2001, Aims McGuinness of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems described how the work of state higher education coordinating bodies across the country is changing. He reported that the most successful among them are moving from a focus solely on established universities to new kinds of education providers; from providers to stakeholders; from issues internal to higher education to higher education's contribution to broader State priorities; and from the traditional boundaries of higher education to the pre-kindergarten through grade 20 continuum.

As the environmental context changes and priorities shift, a new kind of model for planning and coordination is thus unfolding. To remain responsive and serve the interests of the State and its citizens, the Commission must look beyond the areas with which it has ordinarily concerned itself to this broader universe of educational issues, audiences, and advocacy. This report is part of that important process.

*Prior Commission
work*

The Commission has already been involved in work having to do with the preparation of educational leaders. In December 2000, the Commission approved a staff report on *The Production and Utilization of Education Doctorates for Administrators in California's Public Schools*. It was prepared in response to Assembly Bill 1279 (Scott) which directed the Commission to conduct a study of the capacity of higher education institutions in California to produce sufficient professionals with applied joint doctoral degrees to meet the present and future needs of the State. After consulting with the bill's author and an advisory committee, the Commission structured the study so that it focused on the Ed.D and Ph.D. in Education, limited it to the needs of California's public schools, and expanded it to review single-campus doctoral programs as well as joint doctoral programs.

As a result of the study, the Commission concluded that California would be able to maintain the current percentage of public school administrators who hold a doctorate, based on estimated supply and demand over the next decade. This major finding mirrored the major recommendation of a previous study of the Commission on the same topic. That earlier study, *The Doctorate in Education: Issues of Supply and Demand in California* (1987), stated that no new doctoral programs in educational administra-

tion were needed and that no new doctoral programs in the discipline be established.

The report did, however, suggest that attention should be paid to doctoral programs designed specifically for present and future administrators in California Community Colleges. So too did the December 2000 study, as it raised nine conclusions and suggestions for further study or action, including supply and demand issues regarding not only community college faculty but also for faculty with doctoral degrees in teacher and administrator training programs in the state's four-year colleges and universities.

In December 1998, the Commission staff also prepared a report on the joint doctoral programs in California, several of which are in education, concluding with a number of issues about the quality of these programs and the need for further study of them. This report, *From Compromise to Promise: A Status Report on the Joint Doctorate in California*, was one of a series of reports on joint doctoral programs. The Commission also addresses issues of educational leadership through its ongoing responsibility for review of all new graduate programs in the University of California and the California State University.

This agenda item extends the Commission's traditional focus, as indicated above, to include educational leadership needed in the K-12 schools as well as the community colleges and four-year colleges and universities. It suggests that a discussion should occur about what "leadership" both means and requires and the programs needed to prepare such leaders. If such a study is undertaken, it must necessarily overlap the purview of other agencies and organizations. Credentialing school administrators, for example, is the responsibility of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), and professional organizations like the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) offer a myriad of professional development activities. As already noted, the Joint Committee to Develop a Master Plan for Education, Kindergarten through University is also considering this topic, among others. Just as preparing educational leaders cannot be confined to higher education alone and alternative routes may indeed be preferred, so too must the discussion involve many audiences.

**The current K-12
environment**

Many current news stories chronicle what is portrayed as the decline of elementary and secondary education here and across the nation. This is most often captured by the report of a single test score from the Stanford Achievement test, Ninth edition (SAT 9), the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), or other assessment instruments.

Less well illustrated, however, is a more complex story of how, following years of fiscal, political, and public neglect, California schools are striving to respond to the many education-improvement initiatives that include class-size reduction, high-stakes testing, content standards, the elimination of social promotion, intensive summer school and after school programs, a focus on reading and mathematics, and changes in teacher prepa-

ration and teacher credentialing, along with the funding to implement these initiatives.

A 1999 speech by Davis Campbell, executive director of the California School Boards Association, illustrates the environment in which many of these education reforms and changes are taking place. Campbell cited and then refuted what he said are the three myths of public education that masquerade as conventional wisdom:

1. Public schools in California are failing and in crisis.

Campbell responded that public schools educate more students and have greater student diversity than ever in history. More students are achieving at high levels every decade, including those who have been historically underrepresented and those with disabilities. Schools have achieved this despite the fact that one in four children currently lives in poverty and that state per-pupil funding has fallen below the national average.

2. The public believes its schools are failing and therefore no longer supports them.

Campbell pointed out that, in every poll over the last three decades, parents and community members gave high marks to schools about which they had first-hand knowledge but gave low scores to schools they read about.

3. Public schools are incapable of, or resistant to, reform.

Campbell said schools are changing more rapidly and dramatically than at any time in history and cited, as evidence, the number of recent initiatives directed at California schools.

*Current K-12
educational
leadership*

Despite, or perhaps because of, the successes that Campbell cites, the job of educational leadership has become more difficult every year. From elementary and secondary school principals to business officers and school superintendents, tenures are becoming shorter and the pool of replacements is becoming shallower. Current jobholders complain of the enormous stresses involved and many successful administrators simply walk away, concluding that the rewards are not worth the effort.

Coupled with the inherent difficulties of these jobs is the stark reality of impending retirements of those currently holding such positions. A national survey conducted by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), referenced in a May 2001 article in the American School Board Journal, entitled *The Leadership Crisis*, showed that 80 percent of superintendents nationally are eligible to retire. The executive directors in the National School Boards Association's Northeast Region, with the support of

Brown University, embarked on its own study of the nine states within its region and found that the leadership shortages are real throughout the education community. While turnover continues to rise, there is evidence that the number of applicants for each position posted has steadily decreased.

According to a March 2001 report from *EdSource*, a respected source of independent and impartial information about K-12 educational issues in California:

While little empirical data on administrator quantity and quality in California exists, substantial anecdotal evidence suggests that fewer qualified individuals than in the past are applying for available administrator positions.

Two widely used executive search agencies that recruit administrators for California school districts -- the California School Boards Association (CSBA) and Leadership Associates -- report a decrease in the number of individuals applying for superintendent positions. In addition, *EdSource* believes that administrator attrition and student enrollment increases may well contribute further to this shortage in the future.

Furthermore, many who hold an administrative credential choose not to use it. The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) reports that California currently has more than 34,000 fully credentialed administrators. Conversely, approximately 23,000 school administrators are employed in schools and district offices statewide.

There are various reasons given for this disparity between those who are credentialed administrators and those who are employed in such positions. For example, in a 1999 survey of alumni of the California State University, Northridge administrative credential program, only 38 percent of the respondents reported that they were serving in administrative positions. The remaining 62 percent noted compensation, stress, job satisfaction, and politics as among the reasons why they had chosen not to pursue administrative positions at the time.

Understaffing at the administrative level also appears to be a problem. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the national average student-to-district-administrator ratio in 1997-98 was 905 to one. In California, it was 2,574 to one, ranking the State 48th in the country. In every category -- district officials/administrators, school principals/assistant principals, guidance counselors, librarians, and teachers -- public schools in California rank close to the bottom in nearly all NCES national comparisons of staff to student ratios.

According to *EdSource*, there are at least three major reasons why qualified school leaders have become harder to find:

The jobs of superintendent and principal reportedly have become so complex and unwieldy that many feel that it is no longer possible to do them well. Many say the level of compensation does not sufficiently reflect the amount of responsibility, stress, and time commitment involved. And finally, preparation and professional development programs do not address skills and knowledge required to successfully handle the new responsibilities of the superintendency and principalship.

*Training for K-12
educational leaders*

According to *EdSource*, many who are responsible for hiring superintendents and principals comment that candidates are often not adequately prepared to assume the complex responsibilities of the educational administrative jobs for which they are applying. On this point, the Education Commission of the States comments that the “preparation, curriculum, and management approaches of the past simply are inadequate for the future.”

In California, to serve in any administrative position at the school or district level, an individual must have an administrative services credential. This is a two-tiered process:

- ◆ Tier I, the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential, requires that the candidate have a bachelor’s degree; have passed the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST); hold a valid California teaching or other professional education services credential; have worked for at least three years as a successful, full-time professional staff member in public or private schools; and have graduated from a professional administrator preparation program approved by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) or participated in a commission-approved internship. This Preliminary Credential is valid for five years from the date issued.
- ◆ Tier II, or the Professional Clear Credential, requires that the individual work for at least two years as a full-time administrator while holding the Preliminary Credential and complete a CTC-approved individualized program of advanced preparation designed by the candidate’s university and employer. The Professional Clear Credential is valid for five years and is renewable upon completion of professional growth and service requirements.

These Tier I and Tier II requirements for educational administrator preparation have been in place since Standards of Program Quality and Effectiveness for Administrative Services Credential Programs were adopted some six years ago by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. In light of the State’s new reform environment, however, the CTC appointed an Administrative Services Credential Task Force in June 2000 to review the 1995 standards. The Task Force recommendations are expected in summer 2001 and may result in significant changes to administrator preparation programs.

While new administrators are credentialed by the CTC after attending preparation programs in the State's colleges and universities, a number of other initiatives exist to update the skills and knowledge of practicing educational administrators. The University of California operates the Principal Leadership Institute, a 15-month program for aspiring school leaders, which began last summer on the Berkeley and UCLA campuses. Initially funded with \$500,000 seed money from Governor Gray Davis in the 1999-2000 budget, the program received a \$7.5 million private donation for its expansion.

UC Santa Cruz sponsors a Beginning Principal Support Program modeled after the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program (BTSA), and UC San Diego runs the Principals' Executive Program. The California School Leadership Academy (CSLA) has programs for new and experienced administrators and is run by the California Department of Education, WestEd, and others. A number of nationally known programs exist as well. Perhaps the most renowned is the Principals' Center at Harvard University, which many California administrators attend

Individual districts or county offices of education also sponsor a number of administrator-training programs. Such district- or county-sponsored programs are of particular benefit to administrators in rural areas where access to institutional programs is limited.

Since no inventory exists of all training programs, the following are illustrative examples of what is available locally:

- ◆ The Elk Grove Unified School District supports what has been described as "an incubator program" for new and aspiring administrators.
- ◆ The Ventura County Office of Education provides professional development for school leaders in such areas as education law, performance-based instruction, results-based staff development, assessment, and accountability for school principals, assistant principals, and others.

Perhaps the best-known provider of professional development in California is ACSA (the Association of California School Administrators). It offers a number of programs, including an intensive 10-day Principals' Center Summer Institute; a weekend-long Alumni Advanced Symposium; a week-long summer Colloquium for New and Aspiring Principals; and a Colloquium for Central Office Administrators, all on the UCLA campus and serving over 600 administrators each summer. ACSA also holds Principals and Superintendents Academies during the year for aspiring, new and experienced school leaders and sponsors a number of "job-alike" committees that identify and study issues related to elementary, middle, and secondary school administrators.

An initiative still in the planning stages is the ACSA/CSU Principal Preparation Partnership Program to be provided under the aegis of the Governor's Principal Training Act. The Governor has proposed spending \$15 million for principal training. Should Assembly Bill 75 (Steinberg) be enacted, it would train 5,000 principals each year in leadership, management, and the data analysis skills necessary to implement California's academic standards and curriculum frameworks.

In anticipation that the bill may pass, ACSA and the CSU are working to develop core modules in school finance and personnel management; academic content standards knowledge; instructional leadership skills necessary to align the State's curriculum frameworks with the content standards; analysis, interpretation, and use of student performance data; and the use of technology for effective management of the above. This preparation would meet Tier II of the credential requirements and would involve 160 hours of preparation from CSU faculty and qualified ACSA practitioners (working or retired school administrators) in a variety of learning experiences. The University of California has also indicated its interest in being involved in this partnership project.

Community colleges and four-year colleges and universities

The K-12 schools are not alone in their quest for educational leaders. Similar circumstances exist in the country's community colleges. According to the American Association of Community Colleges, 45 percent of all community college presidents will retire in the next six years and another 34 percent in the following seven to 10 years. And in a recent article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, both the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges and the Executive Director of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges' Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges described existing applicant pools as shallow and lacking both quality and diversity.

George B. Vaughan, professor in the Department of Adult and Community College Education at North Carolina State University, has surveyed community college presidents every five years since 1981. He doubts that community college retirements will suddenly surge and that there is or will be a crisis in leadership but does believe that new paths to the presidency are needed. While not specifically identifying these new approaches, his studies have found that roughly 33 percent of presidents are recycled in that they move from one presidency to another. "If we just keep shuffling these guys around," Vaughan says, "without thinking of new ways to bring new people in, then we certainly *will* have a crisis."

In terms of preparing community college leaders, few programs exist in the specific field and enrollments in them have dwindled. While the number of advanced degrees in higher education administration in general rose 13.4 percent from 1993 to 1997, comparable degrees in community college administration plummeted 78 percent. Last spring, educational leaders in California, prompted by a number of presidential searches that netted few qualified applicants, began the development of the Community

College Leadership Development Initiative. Through this initiative, they hope to create a doctoral program in community college leadership at Claremont Graduate School, doctoral fellowships, certificate programs, and summer workshops. The initiative is similar to a proposal developed several years ago by staff at the Commission and the Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and explored with California State University, Monterey Bay.

Equally worrisome are unsolicited reports from several of the deans of the California State University Schools of Education of shortages of education faculty with appropriate doctorates. This is another category of educational leadership and one to which little attention has heretofore been paid. If there is to be increasing attention paid to the preparation of educational leaders, whether in doctoral, master's, credential, or other programs, it is essential that there be a sufficient number of highly qualified faculty to direct and teach in these programs.

**The next steps
toward improved
educational leader
preparation**

If California is to continue its focus on educational improvement, the preparation of educational leaders at all levels must remain a State priority with concomitant funding commitments. Little is known, however, about the efficacy of current preparation programs, and before any new directions are forged, it is imperative that attention be paid to the recommendations that have already been proposed by the Commission and others and to the initiatives already underway or anticipated. Commission staff recommends such an examination, perhaps by separate agencies that could then develop a plan that responds to the need for educational leadership in all three systems of education: K-12, community colleges, and four-year colleges and universities. While each has unique requirements, there is clearly an overlap among them and the potential for alignment.

If the analyses are to be useful, several general issues must be examined thoroughly. Commission staff believes that the following questions are most central.

- ◆ What knowledge and skills do educational leaders need in order to serve the needs of the students whom they lead and the institutions/society/State whom they serve?
- ◆ What are the most effective mechanisms/programs/degrees for giving educational leaders the knowledge and skills that they need: Doctoral degree programs in Education? Professional Master's degree programs in Education? Administrative Credential programs? Internships? Certificate programs? Continuing education programs? How do the costs and benefits compare?
- ◆ What should the content of such programs be, given the changing educational environment?

- ◆ How do we ensure that programs are accessible to all students, especially those students who belong to groups who are historically under-represented in administrative leadership positions or those who live in rural isolated areas of the state?
- ◆ How do different types of programs that prepare educational leaders differ in the quality of instruction and intellectual rigor and how do these differences affect the quality of leadership of these graduates?
- ◆ How are other states dealing with these issues, and are there alternative models or best practices that California has not considered in preparing educational leaders?
- ◆ How do other professions address issues both of preparation and of continuing education? What if preparation isn't the issue in attracting educational leaders but, rather, compensation, stress, working conditions, etc.? How can they be improved and who will assume that responsibility?

Following upon these broader questions, staff recommends, in the interest of determining how California can prepare more and better leaders for our schools and universities, an examination of those initiatives that already exist. They are listed in the attached matrix.

Conclusion This item has been produced against a backdrop of intense current interest in California and across the nation in issues of educational leadership. There have been calls from several quarters for expanding graduate education programs, including but not limited to those that deal with the preparation of those needing the education doctorate. Among them:

- ◆ A recent report from the California State University stressing the need for more programs leading to the Ed.D.
- ◆ A call from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing for strengthening the preparation of K-12 administrators.
- ◆ A detailed summary from the University of California of its current and projected efforts to prepare high quality educational leaders.
- ◆ Continuing examination by the Joint Committee to Develop a Master Plan for Education, Kindergarten through University of issues such as administrator supply and demand, among others.

In December 2000, the California Postsecondary Education Commission concluded, in its report on *The Production and Utilization of Education Doctorates for Administrators in California's Public Schools*, that, based on estimated supply and demand over the next decade, California will be able to maintain the current percentage of public school administrators who hold a doctorate. Because this major finding met with some criti-

cism, a number of other important public-policy issues about educational leadership preparation received less attention than merited. Among them:

- ◆ How should California prepare individuals to lead its K-12 schools and community colleges?
- ◆ Are there sufficient and well-qualified faculty for these preparation programs in colleges and universities?
- ◆ Are there alternative routes to prepare educational leaders that ought to be explored beyond the traditionally acknowledged ones?

As the State's higher education coordinating agency, the Commission has explored many of those issues here in an attempt to frame the topic of educational leadership in California's K-12 schools and community colleges by raising broad-based questions about the knowledge and skills needed not only by educational leaders themselves but also the students and society they serve. Not intended to be a comprehensive study of educational leadership or to propose a specific plan of action, this item serves to begin consideration of a complex set of issues and attempts to frame them for continuing discussion. And, while the Commission believes that such discussion should result in decisive steps being taken, it also believes that the first priority is a careful analysis of existing and projected programs in order to determine future needs for the preparation and maintenance of educational leadership in California

Matrix In Pursuit of Educational Leaders

Initiative	Issue	Questions
Joint Doctoral Degree Programs	Quality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the quality of the State's existing joint doctoral degree programs, particularly those in education? 2. What is the nature of the administrative and faculty partnership? Does it remain viable and equitable? 3. What provisions ensure that a program remains attractive to potential students and what mechanisms exist to alert decision-makers that there is a need for special review or discontinuation of a program?
	Access	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What kinds of institutional arrangements exist and are they serving students or serving as barriers? 2. Are students for whom access to a UC or independent institution is a problem being served by joint doctoral programs? 3. Should there be categories of practitioners to whom admission priority is given?
	Cost	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the costs borne by the student and the State and what funding formula is used?
	Structural	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where does decision-making authority reside? 2. If these programs are found to be effective, how can the process of establishing additional programs be simplified? 3. How can a reliable comprehensive state-level database be established so that joint doctoral degree programs can be monitored on an on-going basis?
Free-Standing Doctoral Degree Programs in Education	Characteristics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the nature of these programs? 2. Does their content meet the needs for tomorrow's education leaders? 3. Where are they located - the University of California? Independent institutions? Proprietary institutions? Out-of-State institutions operating in California? Through distance learning? 4. Number of applicants, enrollments, degrees conferred? 5. Can the programs' capacity be increased? 6. Time to degree? 7. Placement of graduates? 8. Graduates' degree of satisfaction with program? 9. Should institutions be looking more closely at the need for doctorates in specialized fields?
	Access	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Should there be categories of practitioners to whom admission priority is given? 2. Are programs accessible and affordable? 3. What can be done to address the ethnicity and gender disproportion of education doctorates as measured against their population in the State?
	Cost	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the cost of these different kinds of programs?

**Community College
Leadership Programs**

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| Characteristics | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What are the training needs and types of programs needed for college administrators and faculty in the California Community Colleges?2. Is there a need for doctoral programs focused on community college leadership?3. Would alternative programs like certificate programs and summer workshops be equally useful?4. What is the status of the Community College Leadership Development Initiative? |
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**K-12 Administrative
Credential Programs**

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| Quality | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What are the components of the current administrative credential programs?2. What is taught and why?3. How much is theory and how much is practice?4. How well prepared are candidates after completing such a program?5. How will the administrative credential programs change with the recommendations of the current Task Force?6. Why do potential K-12 administrators need a credential; would not other training suffice?7. Is there a programmatic connection between administrative credential programs, master's degree programs, and doctoral programs? Can one easily lead to another? |
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| Access | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Should there be alternative routes to obtaining an administrator credential similar to the alternative routes into the teaching profession? |
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**Other K-12 Administra-
tor Professional Devel-
opment Programs**

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| Characteristics | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What programs exist? Where are they offered? Is there a published inventory?2. How are they publicized?3. Do the independent institutions offer such programs?4. What will be the final shape of the ACSA/CSU Partnership? If the University is involved, will there be too many players? |
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| Quality | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is the content of these programs?2. How are these programs evaluated?3. How do they compare to administrative credential programs?4. What are their strengths and their weaknesses?5. Is there an advantage to centralized rather than district-run programs?6. Is there a difference between the programs sponsored by the University of California and by the California State University? |
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| Cost | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What do these different kinds of programs cost?2. Who bears the cost? |
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